



East Fork of Bear River — 6 Basins

Between East Fork and Blacks Fork — 1 Basin

Abundance of timber and convenient streams attracted many tie choppers to this country. This happened along with the construction of the U. P. Railroad, which was preceded by the trek of pioneers of July 1847 as designated by Beehive Monument at Myer's Ranch on Bear River.



Taken by Chas. F. Guild, Evanston, Wyoming.

The most outstanding feature of this time was the construction and operation of the Hilliard Flume, through which timber-ties, etc.—floated 34 miles from upper Bear River and 20 miles from crossing in Mill Creek over Hilliard Flat to Railroad on Sulphur Creek, in the 1960's.

The last segment of this flume was destroyed by a forest fire in Hell Hole Canyon in 1962. Still remaining and marking the vicinity of the place where flume met Railroad, are a few charcoal kilns which converted some of the wood into charcoal.

Not far below this on Sulphur Creek was the notorious but short-lived town of Bear River City. From marker on site:

A CHAPTER IS WRITTEN

Stern days in cold severity;
Frostbitten fingers and wet clothes;
Long aching nights like lost eternity
Feuds that bent in dangerous pose.
Dissatisfaction and fists held high;
Quarrels that shamed the mocking jay,
And put to naught the coyotes cry;
Storm threatening the light of day.
Tomorrow is payday—not so soon!
With chilly wind the muscles cramp;
High water coming broke the boom.
Took ties far past the loading ramp.
No pay for timber yet afloat;
Must move camp down past the train,
And return ties by land or boat,
Or twelve months work is down the drain!

Sometime during the last quarter of the nineteenth century an old tiehack in the Kamas area was heard to say: I am going to write a book entitled: "Thoughts of Wise Men." No one knows how far he pursued his resolution as stated; but we do know that he was then helping to hack a chapter that can be read until this day.

There seems to be no end to questions from those who casually explore the north side and west end of the Uinta mountains—such as: "Why all the old stumps?" "All seemed to be chopped. No saws were used," "The trees were all quite small." And with a little more interest: "Why are some of them cut so high? How did they reach them?"

Though the U.P. Railroad was completed in 1869 great activity in the tie business didn't hit this west drainage until the last decades of the 19th century. It is very noticeable that the south slopes, because of having no river railroad connections escaped this onslaught. But here at west end all rivers and creeks having sufficient high water power were appro-

priated to the task of transporting ties to or towards the railroads.

Mid and late Summer saw crews of men with axes, pick-axes, broadaxes and peavies working in all forks of the Bear, Weber and Provo Rivers. When the snow fell to sufficient depth the ties were sledged by horses to the banks of streams. As the season progressed through the long Fall and Winter the stumps grew in height commensurate with the depth of the snow. Therefore, many reached the height of tall men. Cabins and stables, now much crumbled in decay, can be seen throughout the above described country.



Historical Society of Wyoming Photo

All of this hardy effort was climaxed in the strenuous and dangerous spring drives down the several rivers. The work in cold and snow was hard and severe before; now it was rushing, challenging, dangerous—requiring long hours in wet clothing and—you name it.

Naturally some didn't survive and were left in unmarked graves. Thanks to Calvin W. McCormick of Kamas for initiating the placing of a marker, commemorating the drown-